

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 4995

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, HO

SUBJECT: DIVISIONS WITHIN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LABOR CONFEDERATION

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN WHAT WAS APPARENTLY PRE-1979 ELECTIONS MANEUVERING WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDCH), THE PDCH ATTEMPTED TO TIGHTEN ITS CONTROL OVER THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LABOR FEDERATION (CGT). AFTER MUCH PUBLIC IN-FIGHTING, THE MOVE FAILED AND THE TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE CGT REMAINED IN CONTROL. IN THE COURSE OF EVENTS, THE AUTHENTIC FEDERATION OF HONDURAN WORKERS (FASH) REJOINED THE CGT AFTER ITS WALKOUT A YEAR AGO. END SUMMARY.

1. AT THE CGT'S BIENNIAL ELECTIVE CONVENTION, THE PDCH ATTEMPTED TO STRENGTHEN ITS CONTROL OVER THE CGT BY FORCING THE ELECTION OF PEDRO MENDOZA AS ITS PRESIDENT. MENDOZA, ACTUALLY PRESIDENT OF THE CGT AFFILIATED NATIONAL CAMPESINO'S UNION (UNC) IS A PDCH ACTIVIST WHO IS ON THE BOARD OF THAT PARTY. MENDOZA DEFEATED FORMER CGT PRESIDENT JULIAN LAGOS IN HIS BID FOR RE-ELECTION.

2. FOLLOWING MENDOZA'S ELECTION, THE PDCH ATTEMPTED TO UTILIZE HIM TO PUT ITS DISCIPLINE SECRETARY, ADAN PALACIOS, IN CHARGE OF THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE CGT. ALL BUT MENDOZA AND ONE OTHER BOARD MEMBER REBELLED, FORCING MENDOZA AND HIS COLLEAGUES TO OFFER THEIR RESIGNATIONS TO THE BOARD OF THE CGT. WHILE THE REMAINDER OF THE BOARD DECLINED TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATIONS, THEY DID NAME LAGOS TO

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THE PRESIDENCY ONCE AGAIN AND BARRED MENDOZA AND HIS

COLLEAGUES FROM HOLDING FURTHER OFFICE WITHIN THE CGT FOR FOUR YEARS.

3. THE APPARENT MOTIVATION FOR ATTEMPTING TO PLACE PALACIOS AS EDUCATION SECRETARY OF THE CGT ON THE PART OF THE DIRECTORATE OF THE PDCH WAS BOTH RELATED TO INTERNAL PDCH CONFLICTS AS WELL AS AN ATTEMPT TO TURN THE CGT INTO A COMPLETE TOOL OF THE PDCH IN PREPARATION FOR THE 1979 ELECTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED BY CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR. LAGOS AND THE MAJORITY OF THE BOARD OF THE CGT APPARENTLY OPPOSED THE MOVE ON THE BASIS THAT WHILE THEY FEEL IT IS CORRECT FOR CGT MEMBER TO BELONG TO THE PCDH ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS, THAT THE CGT SHOULD REMAIN INDEPENDENT OF ANY POLITICAL PARTY. THE RE-ENTRY OF THE FASH ("CONSERVATIVE") INTO THE CGT, AFTER ITS WALKOUT OF A YEAR AGO, APPARENTLY AIDED LAGOS IN HIS ATTEMPT TO FORCE OUT THE MENDOZA FACTION. IN ADDITIONS, MENDOZA HAD THE ASSISTANCE OF THE FAR LEFT-WING FACTIONS OF BOTH THE PDCH AND THE CGT, WHOM HE HAD ATTEMPTED TO DEFEAT IN THE BIENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE CGT. (LAGOS IS A MEMBER OF THE PDCH DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE.)

4. THE RECENT BATTLE WITHIN THE CGT ACCRUATELY REFLECTS CURRENT SPLITS WITHIN THE PARENT PDCH BETWEEN "CONSERVATIVES," "MODERATES," AND "RADICALS," THE LATTER WILLING TO WORK WITH THE HONDURAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCH). THE SO-CALLED MODERATES ARE CURRENTLY IN THE ASCENDANCY AND APPEAR WILLING TO SACRIFICE THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE PDCH IN AN ATTEMPT TO GAIN POWER FOR THEMSELVES IN THE 1979 ELECTIONS. MOVES IN THAT DIRECTION BY THE CURRENT DIRECTORATE OF THE PDCH HAVE CAUSED THE VIRTUAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PDCH SOCIAL ACTION COALITION OF FUNDESA (HONDURAN FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE CENTRAL REGION), WHICH HAS LONG BEEN THE FOREIGN FINANCIAL ARM OF THE PDCH.

5. BEGIN COMMENT: LAGOS AND THE, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY, VICTORIOUS FACTION SURROUNDING HIM CLEARLY FELT THE NEED TO PRESERVE THE CGT AS A PURELY LABOR ORGANIZATION RATHER THAN BECOMING A MERE APPENDAGE OF A GIVEN CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITICAL PARTY. IN THIS THEY HAD CLEARLY LEARNED FROM THE BITTER EXPERIENCE OF THE "DEMOCRATIC" TRADE UNION MOVEMENT (FESITRANH--NORTH COAST LABOR FEDERATION) WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF GENERAL OSWALDO LOPEZ. THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN LAGOS, A "CONSERVATIVE", AND THE "RADICALS" WILL LIKELY BE SHORT-LIVED, UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES. WHATEVER THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME OF THE BATTLE, THE RECENT EXCHANGES HAVE CLEARLY DONE NOTHING TO AID PDCH CHANCES FOR

1979. END COMMENT.

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